3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
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excellent protection from the winter blizzards that frequently sweep across the open plains, and horses could always forage on cottonwood bark.

Growing in the sandy soil along the larger streams were extensive thickets of plum bushes and grapevines; and in much of the eastern portion, pecans, walnuts, haws, and persimmons contributed to the food supply of the Comanches. The mesquite, the tree most commonly found, provided wood for fires and its beans were valuable food for both people and horses. The rocky hills and sides of canyons were covered with scrubby cedar. Other trees found here and there were the ash, elm, redbud, oak, willow, bois d'arc, hackberry, chinaberry, cottonwood, and chaparral.

During the hot, dry summers, the area appeared to be a desert, but shortly after a spring or summer rain, its wide expanse became a sea of nutritious grass. Its warm, salubrious climate, the abundance of edible plant products, and the millions of wild animals which provided food, clothing, and shelter made the area a paradise for nomads who lived by hunting. The Comanche was well off and rarely haunted by the spectre of starvation.

To the west were the Spanish and Pueblo settlements of New Mexico, within striking distance of a Comanche raiding party, or near enough for trade, but sufficiently removed to leave the raider safe from any punitive force that might attempt to pursue him through the adjacent mountainous terrain and across the wide, level expanse of the intervening *Llano Estacado*. The watering places and landmarks were so few as to make any expedition into the region extremely hazardous except for those thoroughly acquainted with the routes.

To the south lay a great expanse of wild waste in the Big Bend country; through this ran a network of Indian trails, by way of water holes, from the central homeland of the Comanches into northern Mexico. Beyond the Río Grande the settlements of northern Mexico were isolated and poorly defended. Striking across this wasteland, the Comanches raided settlements far south of the river, returning with many captives and thousands of horses. The great desert expanse prevented pursuit by forces sufficiently formidable either to punish the marauders or to recapture the plunder, and the Comanches prospered as plunderers.

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contact with the Anglo-Americans. In the latter part of the eighteen century and the early nineteenth century the Comanches had moved into an area which would roughly encompass southeastern Colorado, southwestern Kansas, central and western Oklahoma, and northern Texas. In fact, in 1834 General Leavenworth and Colonel Dodge met with a large encampment of northern Comanches about 10 miles north of Fort Sill, Oklahoma, on Chandler Creek within a mile of where Sanapia's house now stands.

Relationship to Shoshone

To gain a full appreciation of the roots of historical and contemporary Comanche society, two important phenomena must be considered—the Shoshonean basis of Comanche culture and the effects of the acquisition of the horse and the subsequent "plainsification" of this Shoshonean base culture. Since the similarities which the Comanches share with other Plains tribes are obvious, these will not be exhaustively discussed. Emphasis will be placed on those cultural traits which differentiate the Comanches from other Indian groups of the Plains and which illustrate Shoshonean influences in Comanche culture.

The physiography of the generic eastern Shoshonean habitat can be described as a Basin-Range type, an area of high, arid semidesert with sagebrush and juniper as the predominant floral cover (Kroeber 1939:798). This environment, in its relative meagerness, presented difficulties for peoples who attempted to inhabit it. Subsistence was gained mainly from gathering; seed, bulb, and root collecting; and small-game hunting in the southeastern Basin-Range area. The land could not support a large group of people in one place for any length of time. Therefore, the pattern of small nomadic bands was necessitated. There was no clan organization. Residence after marriage depended on which family had the greatest food surplus at the time. There was no bride price, and marriages were generally unstable, the partners separating at will. Fraternal wife lending occurred, as well as the customary marriage of a deceased wife's sister to the widower. No strict rules of avoidance existed.

Political organization was as rudimentary as social organization. There were no chiefs or councils. Since the old men of the various local groups had from long experience gained a great knowledge of the area, there developed a passive dominance of the aged. The Medicine man or shaman was probably the most influential individual in this culture. The tenuous nature of subsistence provided for elaboration of hunting magic and a dependence on individual and group rapport with the supernatural.

Religious Patterns

Religious patterns included a belief in a vaguely defined Great Spirit who was the fountainhead of all power but who did not interfere in human affairs. This power could be obtained by men through dreams in which a super-

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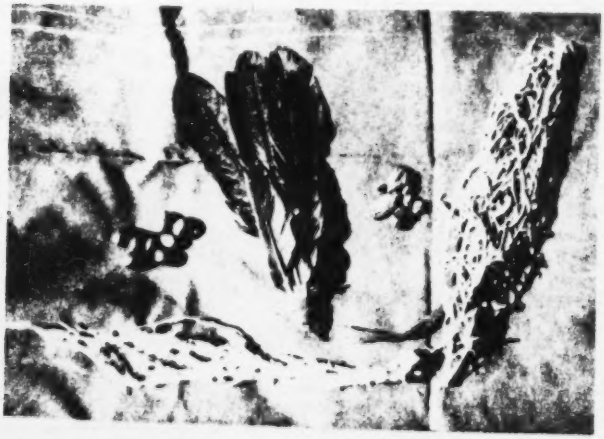
However, these plants are believed to possess a high degree of power by their nature and are therefore not so dependent on the earth and the sun for power.

In the fall when Sanapia judges that the sun is growing weaker and is less able to give power to the medicine plants, she begins her medicine plant collection. She feels she is then obtaining the medicines at their peak of maturity. In the case of my investigation of Sanapia, her collecting time fell in late October and early November. The later the summer and fall, the more efficacious the medicine plants will be since they have been exposed to the sun for an added amount of time.

For the most part the plants which Sanapia uses grow in sandy soil. She denies that medicine plants can be obtained from any other type of soil. *Batiwa:pi* is the word which Sanapia applies to this type of soil, and she translates the word as "sandy," "sandy ground," or "best ground."

Sanapia follows a fairly rigid field preparation of the medicine plants she collects. As soon as possible after extracting them from the earth, they are taken to the nearest body of flowing water, where they are cut into manipulatable sizes and washed. Upon returning to her house, she once again washes the medicines and then stores them in the storm cellar, suspending some from lines which traverse the cellar and placing the remainder in jars. The immersion in flowing water applies to roots or plant parts other than leaves or flowering bodies;



Bottom: sweet sage. Left to right: mescal beans, chow feather amulet, charcoal from peyote drum, gray sage.

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278
824
[142]
291
302
[516]

Sanapia preparing medicine.

but since Sanapia almost exclusively uses only the root of the plant for medicine, this concern with flowing water seems ubiquitous on medicine-plant-collecting trips.

278
801
[171]

Her dosages of the various botanical medicines follow the mystical number four found in the southern Plains area. The medicinal decoctions and infusions which she prepares are always given in units of four—four cupsful, four spoonsful, and so forth. Her externally applied medicines, such as salves and liniments, are administered with four movements of the hand; and when dried cedar leaves are employed to produce medicine smoke, they are deposited on the live coals in the course of four consecutive abbreviated motions of the hand.

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In the following discussions, a standardized introductory line will be used for each plant when possible. The Comanche term for the plant will be presented first, followed by Sanapia's translation of the Comanche term. The English translation of the Comanche term will be followed by the binomial classification of the plant, which in turn will be followed by the English common name.

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824
137

ekapokowa:pi

"red berry cedar" *Juniperus pinchotii* (red cedar; juniper)

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Sanapia refers to all other varieties of *Juniperus* as *taiβowa:pi*, or "white man cedar." She uses the dried and pulverized root to make a decoction which is internally administered to treat menstrual complaints. However, to Sanapia, the dried and rubbed leaves of the cedar are the most important parts of the plant. She sprinkles them on live coals, which are always formed from pecan twigs, to produce a thick aromatic smoke which is inhaled by patients suffering from ghost sickness, vertigo, or severe headache. The cedar smoke is also fanned over an individual by Sanapia in her blessing ceremony, a prominent aspect of all her doctoring activities. She uses the cedar medicine smoke in any instance when she is called upon to dispel the influences of the ghosts. When she is commissioned to ritually cleanse a house in which a death has recently occurred, she employs cedar smoke as a central core in this activity. When an individual is plagued by thoughts of a deceased relative, Sanapia prescribes a fumigation of the home with cedar smoke. She also strongly urges "cedaring" of the sleeping area before retiring at night.

> Only use that red berry kind . . . get it on those slick hills west of here. They say when you use that cedar and they smell it, it blows all that bad stuff and pain away from you with that smoke. It keeps you well, and you won't ever be scared or nothing. Lot of different ways it help you like that. It's green, and its living all the time. In winter, summer, anytime. I don't care when. It's got Medicine for that. That's why I use it.

natsa"ksi

"sneezing medicine" *Helinium microcephalum* (sneezeweed)

This plant is collected in the early fall. The flowers are detached and allowed to dry. When dried, the flowers are crushed and inhaled through the nose to produce the desired violent sneezing.

Sneezing medicine is administered to patients suffering from heart "flutter," low blood pressure, and head and nasal congestion. In Sanapia's opinion, the sneezing stimulated by this medicine keeps the heart beating steadily and strongly, thus maintaining the proper blood pressure. Also, she has the notion that in old age the heart becomes loosened from the cavity in which it is supposed to be housed. The violent sneezing caused by this medicine is capable of shocking the heart back into its proper position.

For those suffering from sinus congestion or head colds, Sanapia makes a very effective "inhaler" out of a small bottle or can. The container is half filled with the sneezing medicine. The patient is directed to shake the container, remove the lid, and inhale the dust when he is suffering from head congestion. Sanapia got the idea for her inhaler from commercials for cold remedies which she has seen on television. Many of her ideas concerning the nature of head and chest congestion and especially colds stem from notions absorbed from viewing television commercials. She uses terms like "bronmicha" for "bronchial" and "simus" for "sinus." The bronmicha is everything in the chest cavity except the lungs and

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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278 heart. Her idea of the location of the sinus cavities is essentially correct, though
824 she does not understand their function.
755
759
[77]
[137] red bean" *Sophora secundiflora* (mescal bean)

ekəpa

Sanapia grinds the mescal bean to the consistency of granulated sugar and then boils this coarse powder, which she first wraps in a makeshift cloth bag. When the decoction has reached the desired brownish coloration, it is strained through another piece of cloth, and the liquid is used as eardrops in the doctoring
[84] of earaches and sores deep in the ear. Sanapia reports that her maternal uncle, a
[783] *puhakut*, would sew mescal beans into the cuffs of his trousers as protection against possible contamination from menstrual blood.

puitsasene

[137] "eye scraper" *Elymus sp.* (rye grass)

Sanapia uses a single looped blade of this grass as a filelike tool in the removing of "cataracts" (trichoma). She describes this treatment as follows:

> You take that and double it up and turn the eye lid over and scrape it just as easy as you can. Then you just scrape it and scrape it until it bleeds . . . that thing on there bleeds. Well, you just keep on scraping until it finally comes off. Its the eye lid that causes cataracts because those things rub on the eye and make them sores. You got to scrape the eye. Put sugar water on it after you scrap it. It makes it feel better. Put sugar on after that thing stops bleeding.

kunɔnatsu

[137] "fire medicine" *Zanthoxylum americanum* (prickly ash)

An infusion is made from the root of this plant and used for the treatment
[752] of fever. The powdered root is also used in the treatment of toothache and burns. For toothaches, the powder is wrapped in a piece of cloth and this tiny bundle of medicine is placed next to the afflicted tooth. The medicine promotes a numbing in the mouth. In the treatment of burns, the powder is sprinkled dry on the burn. The term "fire medicine" stems from the burning sensation which this medicine causes when it contacts an open wound.

bakuma[k]

[137] "in the water" *Iris sp.* (iris)

This plant is an unidentified variety of *Iris* which is not native to Sanapia's home area of Comanche County, Oklahoma. Sanapia utilizes a decoction of the root in the treatment of colds, upset stomache, and sore throat.

bakuma[k] is the only medicine plant whose locale of growth is to some extent controlled by Sanapia. Her mother transplanted a number of these plants

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to a spring near Sanapia's home, and Sanapia makes an effort in her collection of this plant to never totally deplete the planting made by her mother.

This *Iris* is very similar to a variety which is found in eastern Oklahoma, significantly in an area of high Creek Indian population density. The Comanches and the Creeks have had close ties since the late nineteenth century (Wallace and Hoebel 1952:304), and Sanapia remembers traveling with her mother to eastern Oklahoma to visit Creek acquaintances. It is possible that Sanapia's mother could have learned of the medicinal qualities of this plant from the Creeks and brought back a collection to her home in Comanche County. The peculiar characteristics of the variety of *Iris* which Sanapia uses as medicine could have resulted from natural modifications stimulated through time by this change in environment.

pɔbɔβi

"white sage" *Artemisia ludoviciana* (lobed cudweed; gray sage)

Sanapia employs the leaves of the gray sage in treatment of insect and spider bites. She chews the leaves and rubs the resulting moist pulp over the area of bites to relieve itching and swelling.

ɛsipɔbɔβi

"sweet smelling sage" *Poliomentha incana* (sweet sage)

This medicine plant comes from the area of the Mescalero Apache reservation in southeastern New Mexico. It is obtained for Sanapia by Fort Sill Apaches who have ties with the Mescalero.

In a doctoring situation when Sanapia must apply her mouth to the afflicted area of the patient's body in an attempt to suck the sickness from the patient, she chews a small piece of sweet sage and retains it in her mouth with the masticated medicine which is being specifically employed at the time. She states that the sweet sage acts to sweeten the usually bitter taste which results from this type of procedure. Sweet sage, in certain circumstances, is also added to *bekwinatsu* (to be discussed) to increase its potency. It is also added to various medicinal "teas" to make them more palatable to the patients.

During Comanche peyote meetings held on Sanapia's property, it was pointed out that the leafy cushion upon which the Chief Peyote rested was made of sweet sage. The sweet sage used in the peyote meeting is particularly valued by Sanapia as a medicine since it gains an added potency through its contact with the Chief Peyote.

bekwinatsu

"swelling medicine" *Matelea biflora* or *cynanchoides* (recumbent milkweed)

This is one of Sanapia's major medicines and one of the three plants which she attributes with some degree of intrinsic supernatural potential. The other two medicines so considered are peyote and cedar.

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278 824 755 757 A decoction of the thick white root is externally administered in the treatment of ghost sickness, bruises, bone breaks, and menstrual cramps. A paste made from the root is used to coat the finger during the treatment of "poking the throat." This procedure is usually initiated in the case of children with diphtheria or other conditions which are acting to close the throat passage. Sanapia applies the paste to her index finger and lightly probes the child's throat to the extent of her finger's reach. This same paste is used as a liniment in all cases of severe stomach pains. In addition, Sanapia spews from her mouth a very dilute decoction of this medicine on patients suffering from ghost sickness.

[782] There is more ritual activity involved with the collection of *bekwinasɨu* than with any other plant medicine which Sanapia utilizes. Upon approaching the area in which the plant will be collected, Sanapia recites a short prayer.

> Well, I tell it that I'm coming to take it way with me. I say that I need you help peoples that got twisted face . . . what them ghosts do to peoples, you know. Then I tell it that I'm going to give it something in return. I supposed to put a piece of green goods over its branche before I dig it out. Sometimes I do and sometimes I don't. Sometimes I'm in a hurry so I don't do that, but that's what I'm supposed to do, that's what my uncle told me to do.

When she approaches the plant, she situates herself to the west of the plant and drapes a small strip of dark green cloth over the spindly branches. She then digs the plant from the ground, detaches the long root, and deposits the remainder of the plant over the hole from which it was extracted with the strip of green cloth attached to one of the branches.

sanawiba

[137] "yellow flowers"; "makes knife sticky" (broomweed) *Guitierrezia dracunculoides*

Sanapia uses this plant medicine for the treatment of exzema and rashes when prepared as she describes.

> Get the tops . . . the flowers . . . and boil them into a jelly. Now, when anybody got excema, you just wrap it on . . . put it on a rag and wrap it on there. Use the tops . . . just tops. Boil them good and when they cool down, they get just like jelly. That jelly is what you use for medicine.

kusiwɜna

"it's gray" [No specimen]

This is one of Sanapia's major medicines. It is used as an addition to many medicinal preparations to increase their potency. An infusion made from the root is also used as a sedative in the absence of peyote or concomitantly with peyote. It is specifically used, however, in the treatment of "fits" (epilepsy?) and as the main medicine employed in the treatment of witch victims.

When used to treat fits, the splintered root is boiled to a tea, and the

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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278 824 755 757 You just give them a cup full of this, and another cup, and another, and another . . . they just be filled up with that medicine. Sit around for ten or fifteen minutes and that medicine just goes in their stomach and stirs up all that fluid, whatever it is. When you got asthma, you got all those bronmicha [sic] tubes filled with slobber. That medicine takes it out. It comes out by itself, you don't have to vomit or nothing . . . through the mouth . . . comes right out. Some of it comes through the nose too. It runs out fast and they get well. You don't have to treat them another day longer.

itse

[No translation] [No specimen]

This medicine comes from the Mescalero Apache region and is obtained from the same sources which supply Sanapia with *ba:tasas* and *ɛsiɸɔhɔβi*. Dr. Harry W. Basehart of the University of New Mexico, who has done field research among the Mescalero, states the word *itse* is very similar to a Mescalero word which means "mystical influence." Mrs. Julia A. Jordon made a similar suggestion based [177] on her experience with the Kiowa-Apache of Oklahoma. There is a strong possibility, then, that this word has been borrowed from Apache into Comanche.

The part of the plant which is utilized as medicine seems to be from [752] Sanapia's description, a fruiting body. The plant is chiefly used as a remedy for [825] the bites of rattlesnakes and as a rattlesnake repellent. Sanapia describes how she uses it as a snake repellent for her son:

> When he goes to the field, like now, I have it boiled and I just rub it on his leg like that and then a cloth and pour it on and tie it around his boots . . . pour it all on there. Now if there's a rattlesnake running right there, he right up on him, but he won't jump him. He smells that and he just lay low. It'll kill that snake right now. I don't know how it does it. That medicine is really strong. A rattlesnake ain't going to smell it. They going to die if they smell it.

Sanapia recalls that she saw old people among the Comanche carry it in small cloth sacks tied to their belts or around their ankles in order to repel snakes. [752] In the case of snake bite, the *itse* is chewed to a pulpy consistency and spread over the fang punctures, or it is retained in the mouth of the one who attempts to suck the poison from the wound. It is also used in this manner for the bites of poisonous spiders and scorpions.

In addition, Sanapia boils it into a thick broth for patients suffering from pneumonia. She notes that one of *itse*'s interesting characteristics is that it causes excessive salivation, and she therefore employs it when she must induce salivation in a patient.

osidobeda

[137] "peyote" *Lophophora williamsii* (peyote)

Peyote is Sanapia's most utilized general medicine, and in her opinion its curative properties can aid in healing any type of human physical affliction. She grinds and pounds the dried buttons to a powder which is then boiled or

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
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A House for Quanah Parker

In the latter part of 1883 or early in 1884, Texas cattlemen persuaded Quanah Parker, that he should have for his family a house like the ones white men lived in. This was less than ten years after Quanah had led the remnant of a once great tribe into Fort Sill to surrender to the United States Army. It never occurred to Quanah to wonder why the cattlemen could afford to build him a home or to think that it had any connection with their renting tribal grassland from him at much less than its value.

Quanah chose a site for his house on West Cache Creek, soon after the creek left the mountains. The site is about three miles northwest of present-day Cache, Oklahoma. At the time there would not have been another structure from Fort Sill west to Texas, nor from the Wichita Mountains south to the Red River, a distance of forty miles.

The lumber for the house was hauled from Wichita Falls, Texas, an overall distance of sixty miles. The forty miles from the river to the site was mostly a beautiful level to slightly rolling prairie, except for the last seven miles. There the freighters would have touched the edge of the blackjack and post oak area. This scrub timber began where Post Oak Creek was forded.

On many occasions, when I was going to the Grass Money payments, I have used the Post Oak ford the freighters probably used. These payments were often made at the reservation located just west of the town of Cache. Post Oak and West Cache occupy the same bottom in this locality, and the freighters probably stayed to the west side of West Cache.

I have driven freight wagons loaded with lumber over these same prairies, although I was hauling from Lawton instead of to Wichita Falls. I assure you it was no job for a sissy. For the last forty miles of their journey, there would not have been so much as a culvert.

The lumber for Quanah's house, according to my figures, would have made fifteen to seventeen large loads—loads that would have required four to five yoke of oxen, or three span of mules. Assuming the lumber was hauled during the dry summer season, the prairie proper would have presented no problem, as it becomes almost as hard and unyielding as a cement roadway. But the first thirty miles of the journey offered three challenges.

The first, of course, was the Red River. If you catch it at low ebb,

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
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Canyon into the red alluvial soil. In ages past, Deep Red carried 133
enormous amounts of water. Its head is about thirty miles to the northwest of the crossing probably used by the freighters, and before it reaches the crossing it is joined by two substantial tributaries, Jack Creek and Horse Creek. It represents a considerable watershed.

Where the old trail crossed, the ancient streambed is probably a mile wide. It is now considered bottomland. The stream, winding around this bottom through the years, left numerous oxbow lakes as it shortened itself by cutting new channels. These lakes furnished excellent fishing for the homesteaders, as well as duck shooting in the fall and spring.

A Comanche name-giver must have named this stream, for its bed was well below the surrounding bottom and its exposed banks and the water it carried were truly red. Prior to the homestead era there [137]
was a good deal of timber on both sides of the stream and around the oxbow lakes. Three terraces had been left as this miniature canyon had been cut down, and the upper terraces had sizable trees growing on them. As the amount of water the stream carried decreased, Deep Red Run continued to gouge its way down into the soil.

At its crossing, the freighters would have had to block their wagons down the steep south bank, drag the loads through the stiff red mud of the streambed, and then pull them up the high bank on the north side. This must have been a formidable task, but it would have been of shorter duration than the Red River nightmare.

Once across, the freighters would probably have left the Fort Sill ooo
trail and headed north by slightly northwest toward their destination. The Fort Sill–Wichita Falls trail could not have been much of a roadway. It had been laid out in 1882, when the Fort Worth and Denver Railroad extended its tracks from Henrietta. The Fort Sill–Henrietta trail, previously used, lay to the east and followed the East Cache and Cache Creek almost due south to the river.

Blocking their loads down the steep south bank of Post Oak would have been but a minor matter to these now seasoned freighters. The 133
streambed was hard-packed sand, and the north bank was low. From [137]
there to their destination the only obstacle would have been scattered scrub oak that would have had to be cut away from time to time.

I know from experience that the freighting of this lumber bordered ooo
on a feat worthy of Paul Bunyan and his blue ox Babe. I have made the following estimates on a minimum base: 15 heavy freight wagons,

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
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The wounded were cared for by an army doctor, and the prisoners were fed army rations on the long walk back to Fort Sill. Once they arrived, the prisoners were placed in a guarded prison camp. They were given tents to live in and army blankets to sleep under, and were issued regular army food rations. They fared much better than the Reservation Indians, who were living on the bounty of the Indian Department. Captain Pratt, in his book, *Battlefield and Classroom*, says the Reservation Indians protested strenuously. He wrote letters to Washington, interceding for better supplies for the peaceful Indians. When the warriors were captured, or surrendered, and returned to the post, they found their women and children healthy and well fed.

Wer-que-yah became one of our first Indian customers when we opened our trading store at Old Faxen, Oklahoma Territory. We had the name Wek-wa-a for him, and that is the name under which we carried his account when Dad extended him credit to the next Grass Payment.

Perhaps "Grass Payment" needs some explanation. As soon as Quanah Parker was named chief of the Comanches by the Indian Department, Texas cattlemen began leasing graze from him at ten cents an acre. Mesquite grass and grama grass were the principal grasses. Both are members of the cane family. Tasty and flesh-building when in the growing stage, they store up sugar when matured on the stem. Stock eat and thrive on this ripe grass, and during an open winter will stay in excellent flesh. That is to say, the grasses are a twelve months' graze.

Later, the Indian Department took over the leasing of the grass and raised the price to fifty cents per acre. This lease money was distributed to the Indians on a per capita basis. It was explained to them that this payment differed from the issue of food and clothing they had received from time to time; that was pay for the grass the white man's cows were eating—or Grass Money.

This was language all Indians could understand, and the name caught on. Later, when their land was sold and the interest on their money, held in trust by the government, was distributed twice a year, it remained Grass Money as far as the older Indians were concerned. After food, beeves, and clothing were no longer issued, Grass Money and rent from their allotments were the Indians' only income.